

**Appln No. 10/712,364**  
**Amdt date February 24, 2006**  
**Reply to Office action of January 5, 2006**

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. - 15. (Canceled)

16. (Currently Amended) A semiconductor wafer machining method for machining a semiconductor wafer having a patterned surface covered with a dicing tape, comprising the steps of:

carrying out an entire cut through the semiconductor wafer with a cutting blade to form lateral surfaces;

said cutting blade also partially cutting the dicing tape and forming chippings at lower edges of the lateral surfaces; and

irradiating the lateral surfaces ~~of the cut~~ and the chippings with laser light to form a modified layer by melting.

17. (Previously Presented) The semiconductor wafer machining method according to claim 16, wherein an entirety of the lateral surfaces of the semiconductor wafer is irradiated with the laser light.

18. (Previously Presented) The semiconductor wafer machining method according to claim 16, wherein the laser is a YAG laser or a CO<sub>2</sub> laser.

19. (Currently Amended) The semiconductor wafer machining method according to claim 16, wherein ~~a dicing tape is adhered to a surface of the semiconductor wafer;~~ and the laser light is irradiated after cutting only the semiconductor wafer and expanding the dicing tape.

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20. (Previously Presented) The semiconductor wafer machining method according to claim 16, wherein the laser light is irradiated onto the lateral surface of a first cut that has been already formed and is different from a second cut being formed by the cutting blade.

21. (Previously Presented) The semiconductor wafer machining method according to claim 16, wherein the laser light is irradiated onto the lateral surfaces of the cut that is being formed by cutting the semiconductor wafer by the cutting blade while following the movement of the cutting blade.